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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the development of a high school career program related to the Shadowing Experiences provided for counselors by General Electric. Nine Mini-Career Days, related to the different curriculum areas, provided students with at least four days of shadow sessions. Students attended the Career Days from their four morning class periods. Each class period was divided into three 15-minute segments. These segments provided the students with the opportunity to "sit in the shadow" of three resource persons during each period. The career program related subject matter they were presently studying to the world of work. It provided insight into the varied opportunities available. Students had a look at persons engaged in a career in which they were interested and an opportunity to talk with them. End-of-the-year program evaluations were largely favorable. (Author)

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# BUILDING CAREER AWARENESS - A Four Year Plan

Elizabeth A. Blanford

Career Education has been coming on loud and strong at Woodrow Wilson High School in Portsmouth for four years now. We became an inner city school in 1973 and soon discovered that there would have to be some changes made in our guidance efforts. We had been a high school in which 56% of our students went to four year institutions for higher education, we found ourselves with a clientel of a lower socio-economic level with idealistic dreams of higher education but realistic realities that the work-a-day world would have to take precedence at graduation time.

After a socio-economic survey, and a career interest survey, we set about to do something about our situation. Our school had decreased in numbers of students and a room was now available because of this. We went full speed ahead, to secure this room as a Career Education Information Center and were granted permission to go ahead with our plans.

We moved into the room all available Career Information from the Guidance Offices, filed it alphabetically for better use by our students, catalogued it and made an alphabetical index for easy use by students. We purchased draperies, borrowed (on a permanent basis) a few comfortable chairs, two large tables, and folding chairs enough to seat thirty (30), added a few pictures, and original blackboard drawings reflecting things to consider when looking at a career.

The first year of operation, the Career Room was open every day, all day (we had five counselors then) and students could use the Career Room as they used the Library or teachers could bring groups or classes as needed. Our Career Emphasis was off to a big and useful start.

In this first year our concern was to acquaint students and teachers with the wide, wide world of career opportunities and we really felt success

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when at the end of six months we evaluated our program and found there had been 3,171 students who had used the Career Educational Information Center. Our student body totaled 1463 that year and 978 of these students used the room - some more than once, of course. Thirty-seven resource persons had given their time and help and films on getting and keeping jobs, college plans, and values had been shown.

As a follow-up of using the Career Room the English Department had each student write a summary of at least one Career Interest and these summaries were filed in their permanent folders along with their three career interests listings.

In the 1974-75 school year we chose as our emphasis to acquaint the students with careers related to the school subjects offered in our high school. Each Department selected a particular month and careers growing out of an interest or proficiency in that particular area were publicized on bulletin boards, in related classwork, through presentation of resource people in the Career Room, use of the Career Room for research on particular projects, and use of film strips, movies, records all became a part of the Career emphasis. One of the aims of our career emphasis was beginning to take shape at this time - the whole school was becoming career minded and aware.

Another objective reached fruition also, that of informing students of our school course offerings.As each Department's turn arrived the activities pointed up opportunities of study and this proved most helpful when scheduling time rolled around that year.

In 1975-76 we decided it was time to get the students to associate careers in clusters which included the most highly skilled opportunity to the very least or non-skilled opportunities. Sometimes we found their ambitions to be greater than their potential and the disappointment at facing reality a problem.

So we set out to group career opportunities in clusters that students might ascertain where they might better fit into a career interest cluster on their acquisition of certain skills and abilities.

Each month was set aside for a particular cluster of careers matched with subject areas in school which touched base with these particular clusters. Department Chairmen worked with Guidance in setting up activities for the Career Room, classroom and displays. The S. C. A., school newspaper, teachers and students having become career oriented helped our program to grow by cooperation, publicity, and participation.

1976-77 has really been the most interesting time for our program of career education. We started out the year with a self-assessment idea, feeling the ever present need in our students to face themselves and life in a more realistic manner. We ran the movie "Pack Your Own Chute" in the Career Room for a week and all teachers were invited to bring their classes as they felt this program fitted into their lesson plans. (Over 400 students saw the film)

We then had a "Job Clinic" and a "College Clinic" in the Career Room for seniors only and reached all of our seniors in one clinic or the other depending on how they had assessed their expectations of the year following graduation.

For the underclassmen we ran two movies, on a weekly basis, "Welcome to the Working World" and "The Working World" to bring about motivation for decision making - that they might better prepare in high school to meet their future world. Approximately three hundred students participated by class group attendance.

Career motivation sessions were held in the Career Room with class groups involving five class period sessions. Exercises presented helped students

evaluate their values, personality and career interests resulting in a better understanding and equating of their abilities in terms of their career goals.

A big push was made to get our students to obtain, if they did not have one, a birth certificate and a Social Security card. Information on obtaining both was made available and announcements in form of commercials made during the regular morning announcements helped to get the attention of many.

As a culmination of these activities the entire school participated in a program of self-assessment which we called "A Look at Me". A record by Tony Orlando and Dawn, "You Can Be More Than You Are", was played over the public address system to get their attention. Teachers had been given and briefed ahead of time, an evaluation sheet entitled "A Look at Me" which they passed out to their students. Directions were given over the P. A. system for filling out the evaluation sheets and for using it to look at one's self realistically. Teachers then proceeded to follow up as they desired, individually. Some teachers collected these and brought them out later in the year to see if students were of the same opinions as at first participation, and/or what changes had occurred or what still needed to be improved.

The pamphlet Planning Your Career, furnished by the General Electric Company, was used in homeroom time as students recorded on their permanent Career Interest Survey Sheets their first three career interests as of this year 1976-77. Our city keeps a yearly record of career choices or interests on each student, grades 7 - 12.

A representative of the Virginia Employment Commission was available in the Career Information Center for a half-day to talk with Seniors on jobs available presently, and outlook for job prospects in June. Fifty-three Seniors took advantage of this opportunity.

In January we bagan our presentation of resource people engaged in Careers in our City which were outgrowths of interest, skill and abilities in subject areas the students were presently studying.

Teachers in the areas of emphasis, each month, were notified well in advance of the day and time for their Career Day, the procedure to follow in attending, location, general suggestions helpful to making the day meaningful for students and valuable to the time expenditure of the resource persons.

Career Days were held the first four period of the day only. Each class period's time was divided into three, fifteen minute segments, making it possible if students were present for all of the Career Days offered in their four morning classes, to have exposure to 12 career opportunities.

Using different areas (auditorium, foyer and Fresident's Lounge, cafeteria, third floor when all rooms on that floor were involved, and the gymnasium) of our building for Career Days created interest, made less traffic, and created less disturbance to classes not involved in the Career Days. With the emphasis being centered in department areas, teacher interest and effort made to have classes have a representative in each area present for feed-back to their classes, made the program most successful.

Flyers were prepared for each homeroom each month alerting students to what would be happening concerning Careers and other Guidance activities.

On January 11, 1977 the first of a series of Career Days was held. Thirteen local businesses participated by sending representatives from their firms to talk with Industrial Arts, Distributive Education (D.E.), and Industrial Cooperative Training (I.C.T.) students concerning facts about their particular type of business, kinds of jobs manned in their establishment, things expected by their firm of potential employees, the subjects offered in high school that would be helpful to the students, if mastered, toward being employable by their business.

In February, Career Day II was for the Armed Services, with Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard presenting their programs in the cafeteria and only students from U. S. History and Government classes allowed excuses to attend during class time, all others interested visited the stations at their lunch time.

Career Day III was for Home Economics with all areas of this field represented, Consumer Buying - Be-Lo Markets; Child Care - Kiddie-Kampus Child Care Center; Clothing Management - The Famous; Retail Ready to Wear; Hagwoods Laundry and Dry-Cleaning; Foods Management - Morrison's Cafeteria; Health and Home Nursing - Health Care Center for the Elderly, Portsmouth General Hospital; Housing - Apartment Management; Industrial Maintenance - Interior Design; Personal Appearance - Portsmouth Beauty School.

Career Day IV emphasized careers as an outgrowth of interest in Social Studies with the greatest interest surprisingly enough being in law enforcement (local police and F.B.I.), and funeral directors.

Career Day V was a combination of Math and Science Departments and held on the third floor of our building where these two departments are housed. The C. & P. Telephone Company created interest with a film to show jobs available in their organization and employee requirements, Johnson-Atwell Optical brought an excellent display of glass to ground lens, contact lens, glasses frames and sun glasses.

Career Day VI for the Business Department was on two separate days. On the first day Kee's Business College presented their program on proper dress on a limited budget entitled "The Painted Lady" - Career Clothes, Inc., for the entire department. On the second day there were twelve resource people in the same arrangement as other Career Days.

Career Day VII was held in the gymnasium for the Health, Physical

Education, and Driving classes. Resource persons, 23 in number, representing health careers, transportation, food handlers, recreational jobs, professional sports, and food production industries were in attendance.

Career Day VIII was for the English Department with a special emphasis on communication skills. Since English and communication are a part of all careers we had many areas represented. Twenty-one resource persons were with us, among them our Assistant Superintendent in charge of Personnel for Portsmouth City Schools, and a School Board member who is a minister.

Our final Career Day IX was for Art, Music and Humanities. Oddly enough we had nine areas represented on this day. One of our former students who has become a recognized artist was with us with examples of her work and a florist brought flowers and prepared arrangements while discussing the florist business.

This year has been most satisfying to the Guidance Department because we feel that we really reached our students and the cooperation of the teachers in preparation for the Career Day and the follow up after the experience has made the information gleaned most important and meaningful to our students.

Some interesting statistics follow.

CAREER EXPOSURE STATISTICS

| Time | Emphasis | Firm or Organization | Resource People | Students Participating | Teachers Participating | Area Used |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8:30-11:45 | Career Day I<br>ICT-DE-Ind.Arts | 13 | 15 | 445 | 9 | Aud. Foyer<br>Pres. Lounge |
| 8:00-2:00 | Career Day II<br>Armed Forces | 5 | 12 | 184 | 3 | Cafeteria |
| 8:30-11:45 | Career Day III<br>Home Economics | 10 | 10 | 164 | 4 | Aud. Foyer<br>Pres. Lounge |
| 8:30-11:45 | Career Day IV<br>Social Studies | 13 | 15 | 635 | 9 | Aud. Foyer<br>Pres. Lounge |
| 8:30-11:45 | Career Day V<br>Math-Science | 18 | 20 | 746 | 12 | 3rd Floor<br>Math-Science |
| 8:30-11:45 | Career Day VI<br>Business | 12 | 11 | 409 | 8 | Aud. Foyer<br>Pres. Lounge |
| 8:30-11:30 | Career Day VII<br>Phy. Ed. Health | 17 | 23 | 374 | 7 | Gym |
| 8:30-11:30 | Career Day VIII<br>English-Foreign Lan. | 19 | 21 | 684 | 13 | Aud. Foyer<br>Pres. Lounge |
| 9:00-11:00 | Career Day IX<br>Art-Music-Humanities | 8 | 9 | 166 | 5 | Aud. Foyer<br>Pres. Lounge |
| 30 hrs. 15 min. | TOTALS | 105 | 136 | 3807 | 70 | |

Of the 130 resource persons contributing to our program 33 were graduates of our Portsmouth City High Schools. Attention was called to this on the name tags of each of these persons on Career Day participation.